

Claims

- [c1] A client system for efficiently downloading video content represented by at least one content file and integrating interactivity with the video content, the client system comprising:
- a mass storage device;
 - a bandwidth measurement device determining the bandwidth of a network connection over which a content file is downloaded;
 - a download manager retrieving and storing in the mass storage device a portion of a first file comprising video content and a second file comprising an interactive element, the size of the portion of the first file responsive to the bandwidth determination made by the bandwidth measurement device; and
 - a presentation manager (i) retrieving the portion of the first file from mass storage, (ii) displaying with a standard media player application video content represented by the portion of the first file, (iii) retrieving the second file from mass storage, and (iv) displaying with a standard media player application the interactive element semi-transparently over the video content,
- wherein the download manager retrieves the remainder

of the first file in response to the presentation manager displaying the retrieved portion of the first file.

- [c2] The client system of claim 1 wherein the mass storage device comprises a redundant array of independent disks.
- [c3] The client system of claim 1 wherein the mass storage device comprises a network storage solution.
- [c4] The client system of claim 1 wherein the bandwidth measurement device comprises a timer.
- [c5] The client system of claim 1 wherein the download manager and the bandwidth measurement device comprise a single process.
- [c6] The client system of claim 1 wherein the download manager comprises a thread process.
- [c7] The client system of claim 1 wherein the download manager comprises one of the group consisting of an ActiveX control and a JAVA applet.
- [c8] The client system of claim 1 wherein the presentation manager comprises a threaded process.
- [c9] The client system of claim 1 wherein the presentation manager comprises a Windows Media Player application.

- [c10] A method for efficiently downloading video content including at least one content file and integrating interactivity with the video content, the method comprising the steps of:
- (a) retrieving a first content file;
 - (b) terminating retrieval of the first content file before the entire content file is retrieved;
 - (c) storing the retrieved portion of the first content file in a mass storage device;
 - (d) displaying with a standard media player application content represented by the portion of the first content file;
 - (e) retrieving a second file from mass storage representing an interactive element;
 - (f) displaying with a standard media player application semi-transparently over the displayed video content an interactive element represented by the second file; and
 - (g) retrieving, in response to step (d), the remainder of the first content file.
- [c11] The method of claim 10 wherein step (b) comprises:
- (b-a) determining the bandwidth of a network connection over which the content file is retrieved; and
 - (b-b) terminating retrieval of the content file before the entire content file is retrieved, the termination responsive to the bandwidth determination made in step (b-a).

- [c12] The method of claim 10 wherein step (a) comprises retrieving from a peer-to-peer network a content file representing video content.
- [c13] The method of claim 10 wherein step (a) comprises retrieving from a multicast network a content file representing video content.
- [c14] The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of receiving user input via the displayed interactive element.
- [c15] The method of claim 10 wherein step (d) and step (g) occur substantially concurrently.
- [c16] The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of displaying with a standard media player application content represented by the remainder of the first content file.
- [c17] An article of manufacture having embodied thereon computer-readable program means for efficiently downloading video content and integrating interactivity with the video content, the article of manufacture comprising:
 - computer-readable program means for retrieving a first content file;
 - computer-readable program means for terminating re-

trieval of the first content file before the entire content file is retrieved;

computer-readable program means for storing the retrieved portion of the first content file in a mass storage device;

computer-readable program means for displaying with a standard media player application content represented by the portion of the first content file;

computer-readable program means for retrieving a second file from mass storage representing an interactive element;

computer-readable program means for displaying with a standard media player application semi-transparently over the displayed video content an interactive element represented by the second file; and

computer-readable program means for retrieving the remainder of the first content file.